



STATE OF WASHINGTON

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR STANDARDS BOARD

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PESB Selects Contractor for Subject Knowledge Test for Prospective Teachers

Beginning in September 2005, prospective teachers in Washington State will have to demonstrate mastery of the subject knowledge they will teach by passing a test. This past week the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) selected the Educational Testing Service of Princeton, New Jersey to implement tests in 33 endorsement subject areas.

Educational Testing Service (ETS) is a nonprofit company founded in 1947 that administers more than 12 million tests worldwide in 181 countries. ETS is well known for higher education admissions tests such as the SAT and GRE. In the United States ETS administers subject knowledge tests for teacher certification in 32 states.

"We are pleased to have the Educational Testing Service assisting the Board in implementing subject knowledge tests for new teachers," said Tom Charouhas, PESB chair and science/technology teacher in Lake Washington School District. "The Board's mission is to maintain educator quality in the state. These tests will provide the means to ensure that teachers in Washington have sufficient knowledge of their subject areas."

The PESB is charged with recommending policies related to recruitment, training, retention, and evaluation of educators. The Legislature directed the PESB to implement two tests for prospective teachers: a common basic skills test that higher education institutions would use for admissions to teacher preparation programs and a content test in the subject area the candidate is seeking certification to teach, such as secondary math or English. Teachers moving into Washington to accept positions within the state would also be required to pass the basic skills test beginning in September of 2002 and a subject knowledge test beginning in September of 2005.

The law gives the PESB authority to establish exceptions to this requirement, for example, individuals from other states who have demonstrated proficiency through a similar subject knowledge test. The PESB may permit other exceptions on a case-by-case basis. The board will begin a pilot of the tests by September 2002 and the tests will be available by September 2003.

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